

Big Bend

Ranger Programs

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Big Bend National Park
Rio Grande Wild & Scenic River



March 13 - 19, 2016

Sunday, March 13

9:30 AM Guided Walk – “Getting to Know the Agaves” Big Bend is home to a variety of species in the Agave family. Found throughout the park, they have played a major role in the lives of both humans and animals. Join Ranger J. Jurado for a closer look at some of these unique plants. Meet at the Panther Junction Visitor Center. Easy walk on the Panther Path. 30 minutes.

3:30 PM Guided Walk – “Hot Springs, a History” From prehistoric camp to healing resort, the hot springs on the Rio Grande have been a focal point for communities throughout history. The art and homes they left behind reveal their stories. Join Ranger J. Woerner to learn more about the history of the Hot Springs. Meet at the Hot Springs store (50 yards from the parking lot). Bring water, a hat, and good walking shoes. 1 mile. 1 hour.

8:30 PM Evening Program – “Rattlesnake Country” With their sharp fangs and venomous bite, rattlesnakes are often feared by humans. Join Ranger C. Rinas to test your knowledge of these reptiles and learn how to safely enjoy the outdoors now that you’re in rattlesnake country. Meet at the Rio Grande Village Amphitheater. Wheelchair accessible. Bring a flashlight. 1 hour.

Monday, March 14

9:30 AM Program – “Bear Country” Whether you are staying at the Lodge, camping, or hiking in the Chisos Mountains or foothills you are in *Bear Country*. Join Ranger M. Lavender to learn more about how to enjoy Bear Country safely and agreeably with the unique population of Mexican Black Bears that make Big Bend home. Meet at the patio outside the Chisos Mountains Lodge. 45 minutes.

8:30 PM Evening Program – “Cat of Many Names” People and mountain lions share common ground in Big Bend National Park. Is there enough room for both species to peacefully coexist? Join Ranger R. Hamilton for an intimate look at the infamous Big Bend mountain lions. Meet at the Chisos Basin Amphitheater. Wheelchair accessible. Bring a flashlight. 1 hour.

Tuesday, March 15

9:30 AM Guided Walk – “The Birth of the CCC” There was a cry that came from our country in the 1930’s; a cry of hunger, poverty, and lack of work. Franklin D. Roosevelt heard this cry and strove to do something about it, creating the Civilian Conservation Corp. Join Ranger K. Eckert to learn more about the creation of the CCC, and see their lasting handiwork here in Big Bend National Park. Meet at the Chisos Basin Trailhead. 1/3 mile walk. Wheelchair accessible. 45 minutes.

Wednesday, March 16

9:30 AM Guided Walk – “Birds Do Crazy Things” Observe Texas specialty birds and explore some of their unique behaviors. Stroll the Rio Grande Village area. Meet Volunteer J. and S. Ewan at the Rio Grande Village Amphitheater parking area. Please bring water and binoculars if you have them. Approximately 1 mile. 1 hour.

3:30 PM Guided Walk – “Soap from Yucca & More!” If you have the knowledge just about everything you need can be obtained from plants. Join Ranger C. Rinas on this easy walk to learn about some of the traditional uses of plants. Bring water and sun protection. Meet at the Dugout Wells picnic area. 1/3 mile walk. 45 minutes.

Thursday, March 17

9:30 AM Caravan – “Geology 101” – Let’s make some sense of how this place came to be. Join Volunteer P. Spruell for a driving tour from Sotol Vista to Goat Mountain to Tuff canyon (three stops – eleven to twelve total miles) and cram 300 million years of geologic history into two hours. Parking is limited at the last two stops and carpooling is encouraged. Meet at the Sotol Vista Overlook. 2 hours.

3:30 PM Guided Walk – “Getting to Know the Agave Family” Confused by all the spiny or thorny plants found in the desert? Ranger R. Hamilton will shed some light on one of the major plant families found in Big Bend. Meet at the Panther Junction Visitor Center. Easy walk on the Panther Path. 45 minutes.

8:30 PM Evening Program – “Big Cats in Big Bend” Solitary and elusive, mountain lions have incited mystery, myth, and the imagination. Although often feared by people, these cats play an important role in the health of Big Bend’s ecology. Join Ranger J. Woerner to learn about these powerfully misunderstood creatures and what makes them so special. Meet at the Chisos Basin Amphitheater. Bring a flashlight. Wheelchair accessible. 45 minutes.

Friday, March 18

9:30 AM Guided Walk – “The Way We Walk” Many of us have enjoyed hiking on trails, but have you ever thought about how or why these trails were built? Join Ranger J. Woerner for a closer look at the work and thought behind trail building. Meet at the Chisos Basin Trailhead. Bring water, a hat, and good walking shoes. 1/2 mile. 45 minutes.

8:30 PM Evening Program – “Jet Fighters & Hang Gliders: The World of Big Bend’s Raptors” Big Bend is home to a rich diversity of birds, including raptors. Join Ranger M. Lavender for a visual program to learn more about this unique type of bird, how to identify them in the wild, and what makes them so inspirational. Meet at the Rio Grande Village Amphitheater. Wheelchair accessible. Bring a flashlight. 1 hour.

Saturday, March 19

9:30 AM Guided Walk – “The Big Bend Pharmacy” In the impressive diversity of plants protected within the boundaries of Big Bend National Park, many have medicinal and therapeutic properties. Join Ranger R. Hamilton for an introduction to this natural pharmacy. Meet at Dugout Wells, six miles south from Panther Junction. Bring water, a hat, and good walking shoes. ½ mile. 1 hour.

8:30 PM Evening Program – “Some Endangered Evening” Is it dark where you live? Can you see as many stars as you once could? A dark night sky is an important factor in the lives of living creatures planet-wide, a way for humans to connect to days past, when artificial light was non-existent. Join Ranger B. Smith for an evening about evenings. A telescope will be set up to view a celestial object. Meet at the Chisos Basin Amphitheater. Bring a flashlight. Wheelchair accessible. 1 hour.